

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 7 are amended and Claims 16-20 are added. Claims 1-20, as amended, remain in the application with Claims 1-4, 7, 8, 10-13 and 16-20 being subject to examination. No new matter is added by the amendments to the claims.

Dependent Claims 17-20 are added to further define Applicants' invention wherein the sealing strip hollow body 8 is mounted in the groove C and the actuator means moves the movable wall 44 into and out of the groove. The Claims 17-20 also cover the sealing strip 4' shown in Figs. 4a and 4b.

Applicants confirm that Claims 5, 6, 9, 14, and 15 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(h) as being drawn to a nonelected species II (Figure 4a/b), there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

In the Office Action dated February 25, 2005, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 7, 8, and 10-13 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Knap (4.150,509). The Examiner stated that Knap discloses a device and method to seal a gap between a car wall near an opening 4 and a door 5/6. According to the Examiner, the device comprises a sealing strip 22 having a hollow body with a wall 32 that is movable into sealing engagement when compressed air from an actuator/reservoir is supplied to the body.

The Knap patent shows sliding doors for a passenger vehicle such as a rapid transit passenger car. The doors 5/6 are mounted external to the car at a passageway aperture 4 and brush-type seal strips 27 are mounted on the car exterior at the edges of the aperture 4 to seal the lateral sides against the doors. A brushtype seal strip 28 is secured at the bottoms of the doors 5/6 to seal against a threshold member 24. A pair of weather strips 29 is fixed to the exterior of the car spaced from the seal strips 27. A pair of three-sided inflatable air seals 22 is mounted on the car exterior and extends completely about the aperture 4 with lateral portions being between adjacent ones of the seal strip 27 and the weather strips 29.

The Knap patent is non-analogous art in that it is directed to a rapid transit passenger car wherein the gap between the car door and the car wall is much greater than in the elevator car to which Applicants' invention is directed. That is why Knap must use the seal strips 27 and the weather strips 29 to protect the three-sided seals 22. Applicants' claims define a device for

sealing a gap between an elevator car wall and an elevator car door which is not shown in or suggested by Knap.

New Claim 16 further defines the elevator car according to claim 10 wherein the sealing strip includes an upper part continuously sealing the gap at opposite sides and a top of the car door and a separate lower part sealing the gap between a bottom of the car door and a threshold of the elevator car.

New Claims 17 and 19 define the sealing strip as being mounted in a groove in the one of the elevator car door and the elevator car wall and that the actuator means moves the movable wall portion into and out of the groove. New Claim 18 and 20 recite that the movable wall portion does not extend out of the groove when the sealing strip is in a relieved state.

The prior art cited by the Examiner does not show or suggest the subject matter of Claims 16-20.

The Examiner stated that the prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to Applicant's disclosure. The Examiner cited the U.S. Patent No. 4,761,917 issued to Knecht et al and the U.S. Patent No. 5,209,498 issued to Colin. Applicants reviewed these references and found them to be no more pertinent than the prior art relied upon by the Examiner in his rejections.

In view of the amendments to the claims and the above arguments, Applicants believe that the claims of record now define patentable subject matter over the art of record. Accordingly, an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.